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Future programme, organization and methods of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development

Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the future role of the Commission on Sustainable Development: the implementation track

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The World Summit on Sustainable Development has generated new momentum for achieving the goal of sustainable development. The Plan of Implementation of the Summit, the WEHAB (water and sanitation, energy, health, agricultural productivity, and biodiversity and ecosystem management) initiative and the partnerships for sustainable development are focused on enhanced implementation through the realization of specific goals and time-bound targets; greater integration of economic, social and environmental dimensions; enhanced linkages between global deliberations and implementation activities at the national level; an emphasis on regional implementation; greater participation of major groups; the monitoring and nurturing of partnerships; and the strengthening of the institutional framework for sustainable development.

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While the renewed focus on integration and implementation through measurable outcomes will entail changes at all levels of the United Nations system and on the part of Governments and other actors, it will also require significant changes in the programme, timing and working methods of the Commission on Sustainable Development. A whole range of proposals covering various aspects of the Commission's future work are contained in the present report. At its eleventh session, the Commission is expected to take decisions on its programme and methods of work; transforming its intersessional working groups into global and regional implementation and expert forums; the timing of its main sessions and preparatory activities; enhancing regional implementation; promoting the participation of major groups; the follow-up to partnerships, including application of the guidelines and monitoring and facilitating new partnerships; and enhancing participation of scientists and educators.

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I. Introduction

1. The effort to achieve a balance between economic and social development and protection of the natural environment is part of a global process spanning more than 30 years. The process was launched by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972), which identified the challenges and laid the groundwork for a common platform of action on environmental issues. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) firmly established the linkages between economic development and environmental protection, and identified a broad range of policies and programmes to achieve a development model that could be considered sustainable. The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development[1] and Agenda 21[2] provided a comprehensive framework for developing a sustainable and secure future for present and future generations.

2. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002, put sustainable development at the centre of the international development agenda. World leaders, representing Governments, major groups, civil society and other stakeholders, recommitted themselves to achieving the goal of sustainable development. Governments agreed to an impressive range of concrete commitments to action for promoting the implementation of both Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21.[3] The Summit also generated a variety of other outcomes, including the partnerships for sustainable development. There is now a solid repertoire of commitments and ideas to turn the Rio vision into reality.

3. Through the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development,[4] the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation)[5] and the partnership initiatives, together with the WEHAB[6] discussions, the Summit has given new impetus to the efforts to address, in an integrated manner, the issues of poverty eradication, unsustainable consumption and production patterns and environmental protection. The Summit tapped into a new reservoir of energy and brought greater strategic focus to international efforts to achieve sustainable development. If that momentum is maintained, there are genuine reasons to believe that the post-Johannesburg phase will open a new chapter in global cooperation.

4. The Summit drew strength from three significant outcomes that preceded it: the Millennium Development Goals and the broad-based support for their achievement;[7] the decision to place development concerns at the heart of the next round of trade negotiations launched at Doha; and the financial commitments made at the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico.[8]

5. The above-mentioned decisions and commitments provide the basis for taking the sustainable development agenda forward. Momentum has to be maintained through a coherent, consistent, coordinated and inclusive follow-up at the global, regional and national levels. Sustainable development must become everyone's business. Only then will the goals embodied in the Rio commitments of 1992 and the promise of the World Summit on Sustainable Development be fully realized.

II. Outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development: need for a renewed focus on implementation

A. Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development

6. The Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development is an expression of renewed political commitment to protect the natural resources and the environment, promote human development, and achieve universal prosperity and peace. There is strong determination to ensure that the common goal of sustainable development is realized through the commitment to multilateralism and enhanced implementation leading to the achievement of the targets of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

B. Johannesburg Plan of Implementation

7. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation provides for a more focused approach to the implementation of Agenda 21. It responds to lessons learned from efforts to implement the Rio outcomes, particularly the need for increased emphasis on the socio-economic components of sustainable development. There are a number of distinctive features that give the Plan its strategic focus on implementation, including innovative approaches to integrating poverty eradication, consumption and production patterns, management of the natural resource base and health; an emphasis on time-bound targets and other specific goals; new objectives in such areas as energy and mining; flexible and innovative approaches to dealing with the means of implementation; a stronger emphasis on regional initiatives for sustainable development; and an emphasis on the special needs of Africa and small island developing States.

8. The Summit decided that the Commission on Sustainable Development should continue to be the high-level commission on sustainable development within the United Nations system. It should serve as a forum for the consideration of issues related to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development — economic growth, social development and environmental protection. The Plan contains a number of provisions to enable the Commission to carry forward that mandate.

C. WEHAB initiative

9. The identification of five key areas for action — water and sanitation, energy, health, agriculture, and biodiversity and ecosystem management — known as the WEHAB initiative further supports the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The WEHAB initiative complements the Plan and also helps to make the Summit outcomes more relevant to the world at large. It has enhanced coordination within the United Nations system in those areas for the development of five "frameworks for action" papers, which provided the Summit with an overview of ongoing activities in those areas and with possible goal-oriented approaches for future that could give further impetus to the implementation of the Plan. In addition, the innovative format of the Summit partnership plenary sessions devoted to each of the

WEHAB issues stimulated productive debate and provided useful tools for future work in those and other areas.

D. Partnerships for sustainable development

10. The partnerships for sustainable development were one of the key innovations of the Summit. Over 220 partnerships were identified in advance, and many additional ones were announced during the Summit by a variety of organizations and groups from around the world. The partnerships have opened new opportunities for cooperation and a more inclusive means for pursuing implementation. Partnerships, however, are not a substitute for government responsibilities and commitments for action. They are intended to strengthen implementation by involving all those who can directly contribute to concrete results.

E. Implications for Summit follow-up at all levels

11. To ensure renewed focus on implementation, the Summit placed a strong emphasis on achieving specific goals and time-bound targets, greater integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions, enhanced linkages between global deliberations and implementation activities at the national level, regional implementation, greater participation of major groups, strengthening of the institutional framework for sustainable development, and changes in the functioning of the Commission on Sustainable Development. To achieve those goals, the United Nations system, Governments and other actors will have to significantly change their policies, programmes and modalities of work, which should be designed to achieve the following objectives:

(a) Goal- and target-oriented programmes and projects;

(b) Strengthened linkages between global deliberations and national and regional implementation measures;

(c) Broader and enhanced participation of stakeholders;

(d) Monitoring and facilitating partnerships;

(e) Integrating the follow-up of other conferences, in particular the International Conference on Financing for Development and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(f) Enhanced United Nations system-wide coordination with a view to ensuring policy coherence and consistency.

12. The primary focus of implementation remains at the national level. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes will assist Governments by supporting national sustainable development strategies and making the goal of sustainable development an integral part of their poverty reduction strategies or Millennium Development Goals strategies. The United Nations Development Group (UNDG), led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), will play a major role in promoting integration of the follow-up to the Summit and in ensuring that operational activities are coordinated and focused on practical results.

13. At the regional level, the regional commissions and other regional organizations will need to reorient their activities to pursue the goal of sustainable development more effectively. The regional commissions are already engaged in sustainable development programmes, but the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation contains provisions to expand the scope of these operations. It also gives them a catalytic role for the involvement of other regional institutions, such as the development banks, in their sustainable development work.

14. At the global level, two areas require specific attention. First, the Plan requires United Nations system-wide policy coherence and consistency in the follow-up to the Summit, including through the review of the task manager system by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). Second, the Plan calls for major changes in the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, greater involvement of the Economic and Social Council in sustainable development-related work and stronger linkages with the governing bodies of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

15. Substantively, the Commission will have to integrate the cross-sectoral dimensions of the various sectoral issues, such as water and sanitation, energy, agriculture, tourism and oceans, with cross-sectoral issues, such as poverty eradication, consumption and production patterns, science, education and health. The Commission should focus on the interrelationships of those issues. The Plan, coupled with the WEHAB approach, will help to ensure an effective programme of work for the Commission.

16. The Commission is expected to devote more attention to reviewing implementation and suggesting measures to overcome obstacles in order to achieve goals. For that reason, the Commission will undertake implementation reviews and policy discussions and negotiations in alternate years.

17. The methods of work of the Commission will therefore vary considerably for the two alternating sessions. Implementation reviews will require more interactive discussions and participation of operational experts, and will focus on current programmes and results, whereas policy sessions will consider new approaches and focus on how to improve implementation. Changes in the methods of work could include the redesign of the multi-stakeholder dialogues, creating a forum for partnerships and regional implementation forums.

18. In the past, the programme of work was driven by two considerations — balance in the consideration of sectoral and cross-sectoral issues, and predictability of the agenda. In the post-Johannesburg phase, the programme of work needs to be linked more directly with practical implementation and progress towards the agreed goals and targets. The programme for the next decade should have some degree of flexibility to allow the Commission to address emerging challenges, which will require provisions for changing and modifying the programme of work over the years. At the same time, there is a need to ensure some level of predictability and flexibility in the programme of work to allow longer-term preparations.

19. The nature of the outcomes of the Commission is also expected to change. Decisions will have to be far more specific, action-oriented and focused on the precise steps required to expedite implementation. To focus the deliberations in that way, the Commission will need comprehensive and up-to-date reports on implementation. The United Nations system, particularly agencies and programmes

that operate at the country and regional levels, will have to provide reports focusing on Summit goals and targets, assessing the state of progress and further measures required to achieve those targets. Member States could also ensure, through the governing bodies of funds, programmes and agencies, that their contributions to the Commission work programme respond to the needs of the Commission. Coherence and coordination at the national level will be important to ensure that all parts of the United Nations system work towards the same end.

20. In addition, the Commission will have to rely on reporting by national Governments and all other relevant actors, including United Nations country teams, on country-level operational activities in support of the Plan. Those reports should provide sufficient information on progress in implementation or the lack thereof, which will provide an essential input to the work of the Commission so that it can monitor progress at the global level and fill the gaps, wherever required.

21. In the area of partnerships for sustainable development, the Commission could provide a forum to nurture and foster partnerships, which are a key part of implementation. Partners could be invited to share their experience and also keep the Commission informed about their future plans. The Commission should decide on future steps to deal with partnerships.

22. Specific proposals to meet the above-mentioned challenges through innovations in the work of the Commission are set out below. In preparing those proposals, the Secretariat benefited greatly from the inputs provided by many Governments and major groups. In considering them, it should be kept in view that 2003 is a year of transition: the proposed changes, following the decisions taken by the Commission at its eleventh session, will take full effect beginning in 2004.

III. The Commission on Sustainable Development after the Summit

A. The challenge

23. The key challenge emanating from Johannesburg is to turn the commitments that were made — and the goals and targets that were agreed — into reality.

24. The Summit reaffirmed the original mandate of the Commission[9] as a high-level forum on sustainable development, and called on the Commission to strengthen and enhance its role so that it can respond to the new demands that emerged from the Summit. A number of new features and objectives that are essential for the future work of the Commission are identified in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (see box 1), which will entail major changes in the programme and organization of work of the Commission, the nature of its outcomes, reporting to it by United Nations organizations and bodies, and ways of engaging major groups and other partners involved in the implementation process.

Box 1
Highlights of Summit outcomes related to the future of the Commission

- Emphasis on the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic growth, social development and environmental protection) in a balanced way.
- Focus on reviewing and monitoring progress in implementation through a broad exchange of views and experience, best practice and lessons learned.
- Enhanced linkages between global, regional and national endeavours, and greater emphasis on regional processes.
- Coherence in the implementation of Agenda 21, including initiatives and partnerships.
- Opportunity to look at new challenges and opportunities in the context of implementation.
- Innovative methods of work.
- Broader participation of all stakeholders, particularly United Nations agencies and international financial institutions and major groups.
- Giving greater consideration to scientific contributions.
- Contribution of educators.
- Focus on a limited number of issues.
- Negotiations on policy issues once every two years.

25. Primary considerations in designing the future programme and organization of work of the Commission include the following:

(a) The need to integrate the sustainable development aspects of overarching issues, such as poverty eradication, globalization, consumption and production patterns, health and means of implementation, with the assessment of progress towards sustainable development in the natural resource and economic sectors;

(b) The need to focus on the tasks, objectives and targets contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, while taking into account the need to implement Agenda 21 and the other Rio outcomes and the 1997 Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21;

(c) The need to ensure accountability and responsibility for delivery;

(d) The need to complement and not duplicate the work of other intergovernmental forums, such as the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, on the one hand, and specialized intergovernmental bodies, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Governing Council, the Commission for Social Development and the Commission on the Status of Women, on the other;

(e) The need to support policy coordination, consistency and coherence, inter alia, with the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development and the Millennium Development Goals, and to contribute to the integrated follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields;

(f) The need to take into account the special focus on Africa and the small island developing States requested in the Plan.

26. **The work of the Commission should move from the general consideration of themes to a more detailed analysis of progress (or lack thereof) in the achievement of the agreed goals and tasks.** Hence, the Commission's agenda must be driven by the pace of progress in implementation and the need to deal with areas that require urgent attention and must also address new and emerging challenges to implementation.

27. A critical element in this new phase will be to ensure stronger linkages between global deliberations and national and regional efforts to achieve Summit goals and promote sustainable development. Such linkages should be made not only with activities of the United Nations system but also with all relevant endeavours at all levels. The Commission should be a dynamic forum in which Governments, international institutions, major groups and all other practitioners and stakeholders can share their knowledge, opinions and operational experience. Thus, in addition to negotiated decisions and policy recommendations, it will also be a source of information on good practices and lessons learned.

28. **A future function of the Commission, therefore, could be to provide a global forum for the exchange of information, facilitating international cooperation and promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships and other activities, so as to turn visions of sustainable development into real progress.**

29. Continued high-level political engagement in the Commission is essential if all the above-mentioned changes are to yield desired results. High-level political leadership provided by ministers representing a range of departmental portfolios (environment, development, economic sectors, trade, finance etc.) will remain critical to the post-Johannesburg phase of the Commission's work.

B. Programme and organization of work

30. The range of issues related to the three components of sustainable development — economic growth, social development and environmental protection — is very extensive. Those issues are discussed in various intergovernmental forums, including United Nations intergovernmental bodies, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and a number of special bodies, such as the United Nations Forum on Forests. Hence, the Commission on Sustainable Development cannot and should not be expected to address all aspects of all issues.

31. Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation define the overall scope of the work of the Commission. They call on the Commission to provide a unique integrated perspective, while avoiding duplication, on the inter-linkages between the three

components of sustainable development and between natural resource issues and socio-economic issues.

32. Guided by those instruments, together with the need to ensure that the Commission focuses on those areas where it can add most value, there are three key decisions to be made about the future programme of work of the Commission: which issues should be considered in-depth by the Commission in the coming years, how the linkages between issues and sectors should be addressed, and when and how to schedule consideration of those issues in the coming years. Those three matters are discussed below.

1. Future work programme of the Commission*

33. Although in principle the Commission could discuss any issue contained in Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, greater focus is essential to make its work programme manageable and ensure that it is effective and relevant.

34. **For that purpose, the elements of Agenda 21 and of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation can be grouped as follows:**

(a) *The first group* would include general development issues, such as poverty eradication, globalization, gender and an enabling environment, that are the subject of broad policy deliberations in the principal United Nations intergovernmental bodies, namely the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, or that are considered within a more specific thematic context by their specialized subsidiary bodies, such as the Council's functional commissions, including the Commission on Sustainable Development itself;

(b) *The second group* would include broad issues that are specifically related to sustainable development and generally fall under the purview of the Commission or upon which the Commission can provide an integrating perspective, such as sustainable consumption and production patterns;

(c) *The third group* would include issues relating to natural resource and related economic sectors, such as water and sanitation, energy, biodiversity, land and agriculture, oceans and tourism.

35. While recognizing that it is not possible to have any watertight compartmentalization of issues, those groupings would help to define the scope of the Commission's work. Issues in the first group, such as globalization or poverty eradication per se, are discussed extensively by the Council and the General Assembly. Similarly, for many natural resources there are dedicated forums for discussing sectoral issues. In those areas, the deliberations and decisions of the Commission could focus on the interrelationships and intersections between such issues as agricultural productivity and poverty eradication or the impact of globalization on mining, minerals and metals. Similarly, the issues of trade or technology transfer could be addressed in more sector-specific and goal-oriented contexts.

36. The interrelationships between the three above-mentioned groups of issues as relevant for the future work of the Commission are indicated in the matrix below. The top row contains the general development issues of the first group in relation to

* For further details, see annex I.

sustainable development, as well as the general issues of the second group. The left-hand column contains the natural resource and related economic sectors.

Matrix showing interrelationships between issues in Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation as regards the future focus of the Commission

		Sustainable development and poverty eradication	*Globalization and sustainable development*	*Means of implementation and governance for sustainable development*	*Sustainable production and consumption patterns*	*Health*	*Science, technology and education*
Natural resource and economic sectors	Water and sanitation	Interrelationships and interlinkages between issues (see annex I for illustrative examples)					
	Energy						
	Biodiversity/ ecosystems						
	Land and agriculture						
	Oceans						
	Sustainable tourism						
	Mining, minerals and metals						

37. The future focus on implementation suggests that deliberations in the Commission should move from general discussions of themes to evaluation of progress towards the Summit goals and targets and consideration of concrete steps to expedite progress. For example, the discussions in areas like water and sanitation or energy would focus on progress towards such objectives, targets and time-bound measures as enhancing access to safe drinking water and sanitation or ensuring reliable access of the poor to energy services.

38. A sharper focus for the work of the Commission will also facilitate the work of the Economic and Social Council, which in accordance with the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation is to strengthen its contribution to sustainable development through its role as the central mechanism for the coordination of the United Nations system, including the specialized agencies and through supervision of its subsidiary bodies, especially the functional commissions. In particular, on the basis of the work of the Commission and making use of its high-level, coordination, operational activities and general segments, the Council could play an essential role in:

(a) Promoting greater coherence and coordination among the intergovernmental bodies of the specialized agencies within the United Nations system that are involved in sustainable development;

(b) Promoting the implementation of the decisions/recommendations of the Commission through the executive boards of the United Nations funds and programmes;

(c) Promoting coordination and complementarity among the work programmes of its functional commissions and other subsidiary bodies that monitor progress in the implementation of the outcomes of other conferences of the 1990s or that deal with specific aspects of sustainable development.

39. This sharper focus would enable the Council to strengthen linkages between policy discussions and operational activities and to promote a coordinated and integrated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits and contribute to discussions in the General Assembly.

2. New organization of work*

40. **The Summit decision that the Commission will only negotiate once every two years implies that the Commission's future work programme should be organised as a series of two-year cycles. Such cycles could operate as follows:**

(a) **First year of the cycle: review year**. The Commission would assess progress, identify obstacles, areas of concern and challenges in the context of implementation, and share experience and good practices. To support that work, it would need up-to-date and reliable information on progress towards sustainable development at all levels. The year could include regional meetings, expert groups, preparation of analytical studies and similar activities, and could culminate in a review session, which would review its work and identify specific issues for in-depth analysis, including policy analysis, during the second year, the policy year;

(b) **Second year of the cycle: policy year**. On the basis of the outcome of the review year, the policy year would examine options for action at the national, regional and international levels to expedite progress in the areas of concern and consider specific measures to overcome constraints. Those specific measures would probably be the subject of negotiations that would complete the policy year.

41. The two-year cycle should be seen as a continuum linking a variety of activities and inputs from national and regional processes, the United Nations Secretariat, the wider United Nations system, major groups, intersessional meetings and other activities organized by interested parties. The in-depth assessment of progress in implementation on specified issues during the review year would lead to deliberations during the policy year focusing on a limited number of key areas of concern identified in the review year. For instance, if the review year examined implementation in the area of sustainable tourism development and identified particular needs for community development, waste management and investment, then the policy year would focus on measures to improve performance in those areas.

42. The two-year cycle would entail changes in the nature and timing of preparatory meetings, particularly the Commission's ad hoc intersessional working groups. **Those groups could be transformed from deliberative bodies acting as preparatory committees for the Commission into forums organized to provide specific inputs for the review and policy sessions of the Commission.**

* For further detail, see annexes II-IV.

43. **For the review year, the working groups could be changed into implementation forums** providing a venue for broad-based participation of relevant implementation actors and thorough analysis of the state of implementation in the areas selected for the cycle.

44. **For the policy year, the working groups could be replaced by expert forums**, providing an opportunity for members of the Commission and other participants to engage in discussions with experts and practitioners. That would allow Commission participants to enrich their understanding of the specific areas selected for examination in the policy year and explore policy options for further action.

45. Other intersessional initiatives and consultative processes could be organized by interested Governments or other parties, including international organizations and major groups. During the Summit process, a number of proposals were made regarding the creation of issue-oriented time-bound subcommissions or task forces involving a limited number of representatives of countries, international institutions and major groups to provide inputs to the Commission. **Such subcommissions or task forces, if initiated and funded by interested parties, could make valuable inputs to the work of the Commission and raise the profile of sustainable development issues in the public eye.**

46. The proposed changes might require extending the period of time between the intersessional meetings (i.e., the implementation forum and the expert forums) and the main sessions of the Commission. **Taking into account the overall calendar of United Nations meetings at Headquarters, including the schedule of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, it is proposed to switch the timing of the main and intersessional meetings of the Commission, so that the review and policy sessions of the Commission would be held during February/March and the intersessional forums during May/June.** In that way, a review year could start in May/June with the global implementation forum and end the next year in February/March with the review session. The two-year cycle would end the subsequent year with the policy session. For example, the 2006-2007 cycle, including the fourteenth (2006) and fifteenth (2007) sessions of the Commission, would start in May/June 2005 with the convening of the global implementation forum and end with the policy session in February 2007.

Box 2
Main organizational changes associated with the proposed two-year cycle for the Commission

The annual meetings of former ad-hoc working groups could be replaced by:

- implementation forums (during the review year)
- expert forums (during the policy year)

The implementation forums could be organized as follows:

- five regional implementation forums, to be organized in conjunction with the meetings of the regional commissions (using the resources allocated for one of the former ad hoc working groups)
- one global implementation forum

Main and intersessional meetings of the Commission could be rescheduled so that more time is available for analytical and intersessional activities between the implementation or expert forums (to be held in May/June) and review and policy sessions (to be held in February/March).

Main documentation would include trends in implementation reports, a state of implementation report and policy papers.

3. Selection of issues for future sessions

47. An important decision for the Commission to make at its eleventh session is how to schedule substantive issues in its work programme for the next several years or, if the suggested two-year cycle is accepted, for the next several two-year cycles.

48. The most flexible and open way to schedule issues for its future work programme would be for the Commission not to identify in advance specific issues or economic and natural resource sectors for the next 8 to 10 year period. That would also allow the Commission to consider all possible interrelationships among all issues whenever it wished, as well as to consider emerging issues. Thus, an overall evaluation of progress in the implementation of sustainable development in all areas could be considered in the course of each review year. Each review session, on the basis of that assessment, would then identify areas for more focused consideration, analysis and negotiation during the subsequent policy year. However, it would be difficult to review the implementation of all aspects of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in each review year.

49. **Accordingly, the following three options for narrowing the focus within future two-year work cycles are suggested:**

Option 1

Two or three broad natural resource or economic sectors (such as water, oceans or tourism) could be preselected at the eleventh session of the Commission for each of the next four or five two-year cycles, thus setting in advance the

agenda for the next 8 to 10 years. Such issues as means of implementation and an institutional framework for sustainable development could remain constant throughout the period, so that they could be discussed in conjunction with each sector. Some of the two-year cycles could also need to provide for more in-depth consideration of production and consumption patterns, bearing in mind the Summit decision to establish a ten-year work framework of programmes in this area.

This option allows for full predictability in terms of the issues to be addressed by the Commission for the whole 10-year period. Within the broad sectors being discussed during a given two-year cycle, the review session would identify priority areas for attention and negotiations during the subsequent policy year.

This option, however, would have a number of drawbacks. It would leave little room for flexibility and would provide limited opportunities to consider linkages among themes and natural resource sectors (unless they appeared in the same year). In addition, it might prove difficult to select focus areas for the later cycles since consideration of those issues would be postponed for many years. Another drawback is that an agenda that was predetermined so far in advance would have limited scope for dealing with changing realities in the field, emerging issues and progress or the lack thereof in the implementation of the Summit agenda.

Option 2

Under this option, there would be no pre-set thematic programme of work for the coming 10 years. Two or three sectors for consideration for the first two-year cycle (2004-2005) could be determined at the eleventh session. The focus of the following two-year cycles would be identified at each policy session. The policy session would then have two objectives: to discuss and negotiate new initiatives and agreements to advance implementation within the focus areas of the current cycle; and to decide what sectors should be considered during the subsequent two-year cycle.

For instance, the forthcoming 2003 session might decide to focus on sustainable development in the water, oceans and tourism sectors. At the 2004 session, implementation would be reviewed in those sectors and specific areas of concern would be identified. The subsequent policy session (2005) would then focus on those areas and also decide which broad sectors should be considered in the next cycle.

This option would ensure a maximum of flexibility for addressing emerging challenges and opportunities to look back at the implementation of earlier Commission decisions. However, it would not allow the regional implementation forums to focus on the selected themes for a cycle since those forums are organized in the context of regional meetings that would normally take place before the policy session that would select the theme. Moreover, bearing in mind the diverse priorities of countries and groups, the selection of sectors for the 2004-2005 cycle alone may prove to be difficult without agreement on the issues to be addressed subsequently. In addition, the work of future policy sessions might become overloaded with organizational decisions.

Option 3

Under this option — a combination of the two options described above — one or two broad areas could be pre-selected by the Commission at its eleventh session for each of the next four or five two-year cycles, while another area for the next cycle could be determined by future policy sessions. All focus areas for the 2004-2005 cycle would be identified at the eleventh session. This option would provide a mix of predictability and flexibility.

The Commission would establish a multi-year programme, as it did in 1997 for the period 1998-2002, by deciding on the sectors, such as water and sanitation, tourism or oceans, that it would consider over the next 10 years, but it would also leave room for emerging issues or challenges that could be addressed at relatively short notice, or for revisiting issues discussed during earlier cycles if required. Decisions on emerging or revisited issues would be taken during policy sessions.

50. **Whichever option is adopted, a maximum of 5 to 6 specific priority concerns within a particular economic or natural resource base sector might be considered in depth during the policy year**. For instance, if the review session focused on water and sanitation areas of concern that might be identified for examination in the policy year might include access to water, watershed management, protection of water quality, rural poverty and food security. Those would be agreed at the end of review sessions for consideration during the policy year.

4. 2003: a year of transition

51. On an exceptional basis, the initial two-year cycle covering the period from the eleventh to the thirteenth sessions of the Commission, culminating in a policy session in February/March 2005, would not be preceded by the proposed regional and global implementation forums, which would have had to be held by mid-2003.

52. Instead, in preparation for the twelfth session of the Commission (the proposed first review session in February/March 2004), the United Nations Secretariat would undertake a further in-depth analysis of country profiles and national assessment reports and develop new reporting guidelines in consultation with national focal points. Guided by the decisions of the Commission at its eleventh session, the Secretariat would also consult regional institutions regarding their contribution to its work; finalize inter-agency arrangements in support of the follow-up to the Summit; undertake further work on partnerships; and prepare, on the basis of inputs from regional and international organizations and other stakeholders, the first state of implementation report (for a flow chart of the transitional work cycle, see annex V).

C. Forum for leadership, commitment and participation

53. The meetings of the Commission and its intersessional activities should enhance the involvement of all stakeholders, appropriate mechanisms for accountability and reporting, a forum for partnerships and goal-oriented deliberations, decisions and outcomes.

1. High-level political engagement

54. Continued high-level political engagement in the Commission process will be crucial to the success of the Summit follow-up process. Over the years, the Commission has attracted the interest of ministers dealing with the environment and, occasionally, ministers with other responsibilities, such as natural resources, development, agriculture, energy, tourism and finance. The Summit reiterated the challenge for the Commission to engage all ministers dealing with the various dimensions and sectors of sustainable development.

55. Achieving a balanced participation in Commission meetings among ministers with economic, social and environmental portfolios has traditionally proved difficult, largely due to the fact that most countries usually send only one minister to any given international meeting. **Further efforts are required to ensure that the Commission process, in particular, its high-level segments, is conducive to the participation of policy makers at the highest level with a variety of portfolios. Ministerial engagement in the Commission could play a key role in terms of:**

(a) Providing political leadership to promote efforts aimed at effective implementation, finding effective solutions to the problems identified and addressing new challenges;

(b) Promoting policy development in areas where further global consensus is required;

(c) Providing opportunities for taking stock of progress in the implementation of decisions taken at earlier sessions, and to make course corrections as required;

(d) Ensuring high-level policy dialogue on implementation issues with the heads of international agencies and financial and trade institutions;

(e) Mobilizing greater involvement of leaders of civil society organizations, executives from the private sector, top scientists and representatives of other major groups at the highest level.

56. **It should be noted, however, that ministerial engagement in the Commission process should not to be limited to Commission sessions. Possibilities for their involvement in various intersessional forums/meetings could also be explored.**

57. To improve policy coherence, consistency and integration, countries could encourage and facilitate national consultations among ministers on international aspects of sustainable development being discussed in the various intergovernmental and treaty bodies dealing with specific dimensions of sustainable development, including the Commission. Another possibility could be for interested Governments to organize intersessional meetings or processes, involving relevant ministers from other interested countries together with leaders of international organizations and major groups, with the aim of generating innovative ideas or policy approaches to address specific issues on the Commission agenda.

2. Regional inputs and involvement

58. The Summit process benefited greatly from regional inputs, and it also emphasised the importance of the regional implementation of its outcomes and of a

regional perspective in the future work of the Commission. The regional commissions, in cooperation with other regional and subregional bodies, could be invited to undertake assessments and analytical work, based on national reporting for the Commission and other sources of information, for cooperation within the region. The regional commissions could also promote and assess partnerships in their regions.

59. **The United Nations Secretariat, jointly with the secretariats of the regional commissions and in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNEP and other international and regional organizations, could organize, every two years, a regional implementation forum in each region.** Such forums would include:

(a) Policy dialogue and an exchange of experience and lessons learned, with the participation of national implementation agencies, partnerships and other stakeholders;

(b) National and subregional presentations, including input from forums linked to particular geographic areas (Arctic, Aral Sea, Mediterranean, Baltic etc.) and regional — on experience, lessons learned, challenges, constraints and opportunities, related to the implementation of Summit outcomes, with the participation of Governments, major groups, partnerships and other stakeholders;

(c) The identification of indicators for monitoring the implementation of and progress towards sustainable development, both for Summit targets and goals and regional sustainable development priorities;

(d) The review of regional and subregional priorities and perspectives in relation to the follow-up to the Summit and other global conference outcomes (e.g., the Monterrey Consensus, the Doha Declaration, and the Millennium Declaration), and discussion of what and how to contribute towards global outcomes;

(e) The identification of priorities, areas of concern, hot spots and new challenges at the regional level;

(f) The involvement of regional institutions and organizations, including regional development banks.

3. United Nations system and other international agencies and financial institutions

60. Chapter XI of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation calls for more direct and substantive involvement of international organizations in the work of the Commission. There is a need to ensure an integrated approach in planning Summit follow-up activities on the part of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. All United Nations system operational activities should be coordinated in order to avoid duplication and increase effectiveness. The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) has already initiated work to achieve that objective, particularly on the Millennium Development Goals and in the WEHAB areas.

61. There is also a need to ensure system-wide policy coherence and coordination in the follow-up to conferences, including the Summit. The CEB High-level Committee on Programmes is already working to develop a coherent system-wide approach to the Summit follow-up. CEB, including through UNDG, will translate that policy approach into guidelines for operational activities, thus strengthening the linkage between global policy formulation and country-level operational activities.

CEB is also undertaking a review of the task manager system which provided a mechanism for inter-agency coordination after UNCED.

Review of the task manager system and possible successor arrangements

62. The task manager system was originally established under the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD). Its main purpose was to ensure coordination and cooperation in the follow-up to Agenda 21, including reporting on implementation by the United Nations system. In the post-Johannesburg phase, the United Nations system must shift its approach towards arrangements that are, at all levels, attuned to the priorities contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the WEHAB initiative, and to help the United Nations system fully exploit the new momentum and the new commitments and engagements generated by the Summit.

63. There is a need to strengthen inter-agency capacity to (a) more effectively link the normative and analytical work in the system with implementation at the field level, with improved monitoring and reporting at the national, regional and international levels, and (b) effectively execute operational activities.

64. The successor arrangements to the task manager system should be dynamic and designed to:

(a) Shift focus from reporting and supporting normative discussions to implementation, with greater emphasis on specific thematic areas, goals and objectives;

(b) Support and complement the follow-up mechanisms launched by the other United Nations conferences held during the last decade;

(c) Promote stronger linkages between the global intergovernmental deliberations and implementation measures at the country level;

(d) Promote flexible, action-oriented, innovative and inclusive approaches, based on the comparative advantage of different United Nations institutions and the level of engagement of non-United Nations actors;

(e) Apply the issue management approach, wherever possible;

(f) Promote the overall integration of the three components of sustainable development.

65. Task management should, therefore, aim to shift the approach towards implementation, stronger linkages between policy discussions and operational activities, greater involvement of non-United Nations partners and actors, and promoting the overarching objective of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The functions and objectives outlined above will define the form of possible successor arrangements, taking into account agency mandates, priorities and capabilities, arrangements for the follow-up to the outcomes of other United Nations conferences and Millennium Development Goals, and resource implications and timing factors.

66. The CEB machinery is exploring all avenues to ensure that the United Nations system effectively and efficiently performs its due role in the follow-up to the Summit. Those arrangements are likely to be finalized during the course of 2003 and will form part of the overall strategy for achieving the Millennium Development

Goals and the goals and targets agreed at the Summit and other United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields.

67. For the WEHAB areas, there might be a need to explore more possibilities in order to optimize implementation since those areas have a significant impact on sustainable development. **There are a number of functions that must be fulfilled in order to promote new initiatives and partnerships and increase the effectiveness of ongoing activities in the WEHAB areas.** Those functions cover six areas of activity: (a) advocacy and raising the public profile of critical issues through media outreach and advocacy campaigns; (b) a clearing house for information exchange on policies and programmes and for sharing lessons learned and experiences, which could also include preparation of progress reports and the convening of annual meetings of all relevant actors, including bilateral donors; (c) promoting policy coherence at all levels and identifying specific areas where there is need for further policy development; (d) encouraging and facilitating collaborative arrangements on programmes and projects among relevant actors, which would help to avoid duplication and ensuring the optimal utilization of resources; (e) strengthening the knowledge base through various initiatives, including the establishment of linkages with research centres and other sources of knowledge; and (f) promoting stronger linkages between global, regional and national-level activities.

68. There are a number of collaborative arrangements in the areas of health, agriculture and biodiversity/ecosystem management that serve those functions, including global partnerships on vaccines (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, International AIDS Vaccine Initiative etc.), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research and the United Nations Ecosystem Coordination Group. There is, however, a need in the areas of water and sanitation and energy for such arrangements, which should be innovative, flexible, visible and credible, and should involve all major actors. At the same time, they should have minimal costs.

69. **One possibility is to pursue those objectives through apex collaborative groups.** Such multi-stakeholder groups should function in a sufficiently flexible manner to be able to respond to emerging challenges in a timely manner and to meet the specific requirements of those two areas. While focusing on respective sectors, the groups should also promote interlinkages with other WEHAB areas.

4. Major groups

70. Major groups[10] have multiple roles to play in the context of the Commission, inter alia, (a) as agents of operational implementation of Summit outcomes, (b) as observers and analysts of policies and their impact, (c) as participants in sustainable development partnerships, and (d) as observers and analysts of partnership initiatives and their impacts.

71. Numerous opportunities were provided during the Summit and its preparatory process for major groups to contribute to the Summit's outcomes through multi-stakeholder engagements,[11] such as participatory plenary panels, high-level round tables, briefings, side events, partnership presentations, parallel events and informal consultations. Based on the experience of the Commission and the Summit, annex VI contains an analysis of lessons learned regarding approaches that enable more

meaningful inputs from major groups and the key challenges that need to be addressed by the Commission in that regard in the future.

72. To enable active, direct and partnership-based participation, all existing means and mechanisms for stakeholder participation should be applied and built on during future meetings of the Commission, whether for policy development or sharing implementation experiences.

73. The main objective is to make better use of major groups' views and ideas in the intergovernmental decision-making process, and to ensure the active contribution of major groups to implementation. **That suggests that activities involving major groups should be more closely linked to the main activities during the Commission's future sessions. For example, multi-stakeholder dialogues could be spread throughout Commission sessions, rather than organized as stand-alone, two-day segments, in order to make each of those dialogues more relevant to Commission sessions and increase their impact on outcomes and decisions.** For example:

(a) Interactive discussions with major group leaders could be part of high-level segments;

(b) Issue-oriented discussion could be organized along the lines of Summit interactive plenary sessions;

(c) Multi-stakeholder dialogues could be moderated, as they were in Johannesburg, by facilitators from various walks of life, ranging from well-known scientists to trained negotiators, media personalities and community leaders;

(d) Reviews of partnership initiatives need to actively involve representatives of major groups, both as partners and as analysts/observers;

(e) As they were at the Summit, major groups could be invited to comment on the Commission's outcomes during the concluding session.

74. Major groups should continue to use self-organized mechanisms to identify representatives for multi-stakeholder dialogues and similar activities during Commission sessions. The United Nations Secretariat could play a more proactive role in identifying, through a transparent process, individuals or organizations that could bring particular expertise or experience to the Commission regarding the role of major groups in implementation. Given that such outreach is resource-intensive for the United Nations system, ways of enhancing inter-agency collaboration need to be explored further, in particular with UNDP country offices and regional commissions and bodies with a regional presence, such as UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

75. **The proposed regional implementation forums should mirror the participatory practices of the Commission and the Summit, including multi-stakeholder engagements.** That would require strengthening major group networks at the national and regional levels (or creating networks if they do not yet exist) with a view to promoting inputs to the Commission process and developing proposals for implementation partnerships, along with strengthening national consultative processes involving representatives of Governments and major groups.

76. **Engagement of major groups should not be limited to meetings of the Commissions. For example:**

(a) Intersessional activities initiated by interested Governments and international organizations with a view to producing conclusions and recommendations on specific issues or goals, such as expert group meetings or subcommissions and task forces as described above, should include representatives of major groups;

(b) Intersessional and pre-sessional collaboration and consultations among major groups should be enhanced. Such work would provide opportunities for those more experienced with the Commission process to share their experience with newcomers and would respond to the need for capacity-building among major groups;

(c) More regular briefings by the Chair/Bureau of the Commission could be organized for major groups, with increased interactions between the Chair and other members of the Bureau and leaders of major group organizations.

77. A major challenge is to mobilize adequate extrabudgetary resources to facilitate the involvement of major groups, particularly from developing countries, in Commission meetings and in support of Commission-related networks and consultative processes of major groups.

Situation of Summit accredited major groups

78. Over 700 new organizations were accredited to the Summit in addition to the nearly 3,000 that already had access to the process through Economic and Social Council accreditation or inclusion on the Commission's list. **To ensure that those new actors in the United Nations sustainable development process continue to contribute to the follow-up process, it is proposed that the Commission recommend that they be allowed to seek fast-track accreditation by the Council.**

5. Strengthening scientific expertise

79. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation highlighted the need for the Commission to give greater consideration to scientific contributions to sustainable development through, for example, drawing on the scientific community and encouraging national, regional and scientific networks to be involved in its work.

80. In promoting contributions from the scientific community, it is important to distinguish between scientific advisory processes and multi-stakeholder processes since each has different objectives and modalities. The scientific and technological community will continue to participate as an Agenda 21 major group in multi-stakeholder processes that are an integral element of the work cycle of the Commission. The purpose of scientific advisory processes, on the other hand, is to provide the Commission with the best scientific expertise available on specific issues under consideration by the Commission throughout its work cycle, including its proposed expert forums.

81. Bringing scientific expertise from various disciplines into the Commission would assist the Commission in considering and recommending solutions to practical problems of sustainable development. Science-supported policy reviews and analyses would provide a more reliable basis for its policy decision-making. The Commission process could also benefit from eminent scientists invited as panellists or lecturers to give keynote addresses or lectures on evolving or emerging issues.

82. **Modalities designed to bring scientific expertise to policy discussions and decision-making in the Commission must be practical, flexible and responsive to particular needs throughout its work cycle.** A broad range of scientific institutions from developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition should be involved, bearing in mind that only scientists recognized by their peers, nationally and internationally, can provide credible inputs to the Commission process.

83. **The Summit, decided that the work of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development should be transferred to the Commission. It is proposed that the resources released as a result of that decision be transferred to the Commission in order to enable the Commission to obtain the best expert advice as required for its programme.**

6. Educators and other stakeholder groups

84. The Summit also decided that the Commission should further the contribution of educators to sustainable development, including, where appropriate, in the activities of the Commission. The role of educators in shaping the worldview of younger generations is crucial for sustainable development. **It is proposed that the Commission consider involving educators in panels and interactive discussions in its sessions to increase the exchange of experience on the most promising educational policies, methodologies and tools. It is also proposed that an informal learning centre be established in parallel with Commission sessions to provide a forum for experts from Governments, international organizations and major groups to share knowledge and engage in various capacity-building and education activities.**

85. There are also other categories of stakeholders that could make considerable contributions to the work of the Commission in the next phase, such as representatives of the legislative and judicial branches of government and the media. Possibilities for their involvement in Summit follow-up needs to be further explored through consultations with their representative international organizations.

D. Partnership initiatives

86. The concept of partnerships as part of the Summit process arose in part from the recognition that innovative, broadly participatory approaches were needed to implement sustainable development, and that those implementing successful projects are often acting outside the intergovernmental system. The challenge has been to identify successful examples of actors working together to achieve a common goal and then to take such activities "to scale" or to replicate them, so that activities proven effective on a small scale can help larger numbers of people around the world. There was also a desire to move from a donor-defined framework to one in which those benefiting from a given project and other stakeholders could work together on a more equal footing, from the conceptual design of the project through to its operation. However, partnership initiatives cannot substitute for intergovernmentally agreed commitments, such as those agreed in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Rather, partnerships serve as an important adjunct to such commitments, as a way of deepening and improving the quality of implementation.

87. The partnerships for sustainable development that were generated by the Summit constitute only a small fraction of the wide range of partnerships that have been developed by a variety of stakeholders over a long period of time and which continue to be developed. The partnerships announced at the Summit have a special character, however, since they are specifically linked to the negotiated outcomes of the Summit and form an important part of its follow-up.

88. Guiding principles for partnerships were developed through an informal process during Summit preparations. The United Nations Secretariat reviewed each partnership proposal submitted against those guiding principles. Only half of the roughly 500 proposals received to date have been accepted for posting on the partnerships section of the official Summit web site. Partnerships have not been posted on the web site, for example, if they are not new proposals or do not have an international impact. In such cases, the Secretariat has informed the partners of the reasons for not accepting proposals and, where possible, has made suggestions for revising submissions in line with the guiding principles.

89. Although the guiding principles in their current version enjoyed broad agreement by participants at the end of the informal consultations, they have not been officially endorsed or adopted. **It is proposed that the Commission clarify a number of issues relating to partnerships, such as the applicability of the guiding principles, reporting mechanisms, interaction with national-level processes and funding issues, keeping in mind that a flexible approach is desirable in order to encourage further partnerships and to allow for creativity.**

Box 3
Main objectives of the Summit follow-up process on partnerships

- Integrating partnerships as an important element of the overall follow-up to the Summit, in particular for achieving specific goals and targets agreed at the Summit.
- Maintaining the momentum for partnerships created by the Summit.
- Monitoring the progress of Summit partnerships through a transparent and credible process.
- Giving guidance and facilitating the progress of partnerships.
- Promoting and facilitating new partnerships.

90. The Secretariat has already undertaken a number of steps to help ensure the transparency and openness of the follow-up process. The sustainable development partnerships section of the United Nations web site has been restructured and updated regularly since the Summit. A database is being developed to allow easy access to information about those partnerships. A request has been sent out to those responsible for the partnerships listed on the web site, asking for an update on their activities. The Secretariat intends to request similar updates on a regular basis and will make the results accessible on its web site.

91. In order to keep the Commission informed about partnerships' activities and progress in achieving their targets, it is proposed that a reporting mechanism be

developed. Such a mechanism needs to take into account both the voluntary nature of the partnerships and the demand for a transparent and credible evaluation of their performance. Guidelines for reporting — which should be as simple and user-friendly as possible — could be developed by the United Nations Secretariat, in consultation with those involved in the partnerships and other stakeholders in the Commission process. Partnerships could report biannually to the Secretariat about their activities on the basis of those guidelines. The information received would be made available to the relevant regional implementation forums during the review year of the proposed new Commission cycle. The Secretariat could produce an overview report every two years on the basis of the partnerships' reporting and the outcomes of the regional forums, for discussion in review sessions. In the policy sessions, an implementation update on partnerships could be provided, with an emphasis on those dealing with the issues identified for the session.

92. It is proposed that Commission discussions with and about partnerships focus on lessons learned, progress made and best practices, and identify ways to assist partnerships with implementation, where required, and encourage new partnerships.

IV. Conclusion

93. **In line with the provisions of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Commission may wish to take decisions on:**

(a) **The contents of its future multi-year programme of work;**

(b) **New organizational arrangements to enable the Commission to fulfil its renewed mandate, with a focus on implementation, including:**

(i) **The proposed transformation of its ad hoc intersessional working groups into regional and global implementation forums and expert forums;**

(ii) **Arrangements for greater involvement of international organizations and major groups in its work;**

(iii) **Ways to enhance scientific contributions to the work of the Commission and further the contribution of educators;**

(iv) **Arrangements to enable the Commission to serve as a focal point for the discussion of partnerships that promote sustainable development.**

94. **The decisions made by the Commission on the above matters will require thoughtful preparation, creative thinking and broad consultations among all interested parties. They will be of great significance and will set the tone for the revitalized Commission for years to come.**

Notes

[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex I.

[2] Ibid., annex II.

[3] General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex.

[4] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[5] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[6] The Secretary-General's WEHAB initiative consists of focusing on five key thematic areas: water and sanitation, energy, health, agricultural productivity, and biodiversity and ecosystem management.

[7] See General Assembly resolution 55/2 and document A/56/326, sect. III and annex.

[8] See *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7) chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[9] As stipulated in Agenda 21 and General Assembly resolution 47/191.

[10] The major groups as identified in Agenda 21 are: women, children and youth, indigenous people, NGOs, local authorities, workers and their trade unions, business and industry, the scientific and technology community, and farmers.

[11] In the context of the Commission, "multi-stakeholder" means the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the process, including Governments, intergovernmental organizations and major groups.

Annex I

Proposed matrix of issues on which the Commission on Sustainable Development could focus

	Sustainable development and poverty eradication	*Globalization and sustainable development*	*Means of implementation and governance for sustainable development*	*Sustainable production and consumption patterns*	*Health*	*Science, technology and education*
Natural resource sectors and economic sectors	• Enable the poor to achieve sustainable livelihoods • Improve poor people's access to productive resources and public services, including credit, land, water and energy services • Integrate health concerns into strategies for poverty eradication	• Promote corporate environmental and social responsibility and accountability • Promote policies to make globalization fully inclusive and supportive of sustainable development	• Strengthen institutional frameworks for sustainable development at all levels • Strengthen information for decision-making	• Develop a 10-year framework of programmes in support of sustainable consumption and production • De-link economic growth and environmental degradation • Promote use of economic instruments	• Reduce health risks from environmental pollution	• Build greater capacity in science and technology and promote access to transfer of technology • Make greater use of integrated scientific assessments • Integrate sustainable development into education systems at all levels of education
Water and sanitation	• Ensure reliable access of the poor to safe water and sanitation • Enhance capacity-building for water and sanitation infrastructure • Integrate productive water use considerations into national policies and programmes • Improve productive use of water as a means of sustainable community livelihoods	• Promote public-private partnerships and other forms of partnerships • Transfer and disseminate technologies for sanitation and waste management in urban/rural areas	• Promote integrated water management strategies, with participation of basin/aquifer stakeholders • Strengthen national capabilities in public regulation for equitable water development to expand activities of public and private service providers	• Strengthen the protection of water resources, water quality and aquatic ecosystems • Enhance efficient use of water resources through integrated river-basin management plans and policies • Intensify water pollution prevention • Improve the efficiency of water infrastructure	• Develop national and local programmes to reduce and eliminate water-borne diseases • Promote sanitation and hygiene education campaigns, with particular focus on women and children	• Disseminate water conservation technologies • Mobilize financial resources and transfer technology to promote best practices

	Sustainable development and poverty eradication	*Globalization and sustainable development*	*Means of implementation and governance for sustainable development*	*Sustainable production and consumption patterns*	*Health*	*Science, technology and education*
Energy	• Ensure access of the poor to energy services • Integrate energy accessibility considerations into socio-economic programmes • Promote sustainable energy and transport in human settlements	• Improve the functioning, transparency, and information about energy markets to ensure their greater stability	• Establish a network of centres of excellence	• Establish domestic programmes for energy efficiency • Increase renewable energy resources, including hydro • Reduce subsidies that distort energy markets • Support the transition to the cleaner use of liquid and gaseous fuels, particularly in the transport sector • Meet all the commitments and obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	• Reduce and eliminate indoor air pollution • Phase out lead and sulphur in gasoline	• Take further action to mobilize resources and transfer advanced energy technologies, including alternative energy technologies • Promote increased research, development and dissemination of advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies
Biodiversity/ ecosystems	• Integrate the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the programmes and policies of the economic sectors at the national and international levels • Ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources • Address poverty through sustainable forest management	• Strengthen efforts to control invasive alien species • Promote relations between the Convention and trade and intellectual property agreements	• Encourage technical and financial support to developing countries in the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources • Implement IPF/IFF proposals for action • Increase trade, capacity-building, forest law enforcement, governance, and integrated land and resource management	• Achieve a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity • Support initiatives for hot-spot areas • Promote community-based sustainable use of biological diversity • Act on illegal logging	• Promote indigenous knowledge and traditional practices	• Increase financial resources and technology transfer • Promote the application and development of the ecosystem approach

	Sustainable development and poverty eradication	*Globalization and sustainable development*	*Means of implementation and governance for sustainable development*	*Sustainable production and consumption patterns*	*Health*	*Science, technology and education*
Land and agriculture	• Ensure access of the poor to agricultural resources • Support sustainable agriculture and rural development to increase food production, enhance food security and reduce hunger • Transfer basic agricultural techniques and knowledge to small and medium-scale farmers, fishers and the rural poor • Support sustainable livelihoods for people living in mountain regions	• Enhance market access of agricultural products from developing countries	• Develop and implement integrated land management and water-use plans and promote integrated information systems in land use practices • Enhance the participation of women in all aspects relating to sustainable agriculture and food security • Strengthen implementation of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification • Develop programmes to integrate environment, economic and social components of sustainable mountain development	• Promote sustainable management of land and other agricultural resources • Prevent land degradation, improve soil fertility and agricultural pest control • Promote diversification of mountain economies, including traditional and small-scale production systems	• Combat illicit cultivation of narcotic plants • Reduce agriculture-related pollution	• Increase public and private sector finance for sustainable agriculture and agriculture research

	Sustainable development and poverty eradication	*Globalization and sustainable development*	*Means of implementation and governance for sustainable development*	*Sustainable production and consumption patterns*	*Health*	*Science, technology and education*
Oceans	• Promote integrated management and sustainable development of coastal and marine areas, including exclusive economic zones • Support development of small-scale aquaculture • Promote sustainable coastal and small-scale fishing activities	• Combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing	• Eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing • Establish an inter-agency coordination mechanism within the United Nations system • Establish a regular United Nations process for global reporting and assessment of the marine environment	• Maintain or restore depleted fish stocks to levels of sustainable yield • Promote sustainable use and conservation of living resources of the high seas • Strengthen marine environmental protection and build a network of marine protected areas • Apply the ecosystem approach in fisheries and in marine biological diversity	• Achieve maritime safety • Prevent marine pollution	• Increase collaboration and partnerships in research on marine science and technology
Sustainable tourism	• Increase benefits from tourism resources for the population in host communities	• Develop community-based initiatives on sustainable tourism • Increase benefits from tourism resources for the host communities while maintaining their cultural and environmental integrity	• Enhance international cooperation, FDI and partnerships with both the private and public sectors to promote sustainable tourism	• Promote sustainable tourism, including non-consumptive and eco-tourism • Enhance the protection of ecologically sensitive areas and natural heritages		• Provide technical assistance to support sustainable tourism business development
Mining, minerals and metals	• Support natural resources management, including addressing environmental, economic and social impacts of mining operations with a view to creating sustainable livelihoods for the poor	• Enhance the participation of local stakeholders in minerals, metals and mining development throughout the life cycles of mining operations	• Enhance participation of local and indigenous communities and women in mining and minerals development	• Promote transparency and accountability for sustainable mining and minerals development	• Support efforts to address health impacts of mining, including safe and sustainable livelihood opportunities in small-scale mining ventures	• Provide financial, technical capacity-building support to improve value-added processing, upgrade scientific and technological information and reclaim and rehabilitate degraded sites

Annex II

Proposed typical two-year work cycle of the Commission on Sustainable Development

Review year

1. The review year could start with **regional implementation forums** that for practical purposes could be held back-to-back with meetings of the regional commissions in order to review national and regional progress and exchange experience on best practice and lessons learned.

2. The results of the regional implementation forums, along with reports on critical trends in implementation prepared by the United Nations Secretariat and other relevant activities organized during the period, would feed into the **global implementation forum** (to be held in New York during May/June). The global forum would provide for broad participation of all implementation actors and result in a thorough analysis of the state of implementation.

3. In addition, various intersessional initiatives organized by interested organizations and Governments, with a focus on promoting implementation, would need to be encouraged in accordance with Commission practice established in earlier years.

4. The review year could culminate in **the review session**, to be held in February/March of the subsequent year. The review session would assess all of the information gathered during the review year and make decisions about which five or six key areas of concern would be subject to more detailed attention and negotiations during the subsequent policy year. The Secretary-General's **state of implementation report** could be produced for consideration at that session, providing an analytical overview of progress and identification of areas of concern as well as new challenges in the field of implementation.

Policy year

5. The policy year could start with **expert forums**, which would be held during May/June to explore both concrete and policy options for expediting progress in those areas that had been identified for further consideration for the policy year. That would provide an opportunity for members of the Commission and other participants to engage in discussions with experts and practitioners in the field to enrich their understanding of the detailed issues, including the provision of specific scientific advice on a given issue, and could also involve discussions of the effectiveness of partnerships in a given area. Arrangements for the involvement of experts and practitioners should be flexible and demand driven.

6. Intersessional initiatives and consultative processes could be set in motion by interested Governments or other interested parties, including international organizations and major groups. It should be noted that a number of interesting proposals were made regarding the setting up of issue-oriented time-bound **subcommissions and/or task forces** involving a limited number of representatives of countries, international institutions and major groups to support preparations for the Commission. Such subcommissions or task forces, if initiated and funded by

interested parties, could make valuable inputs to the work of the Commission and raise the profile of issues in the public eye.

7. On the basis of all inputs received, **Secretary-General's policy papers** would be produced, including recommendations and proposals for action, to facilitate discussions and negotiations during the following policy session. Other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, including regional commissions, specialized agencies and funds and programmes, would be involved in preparation of those policy papers.

8. The main aim of the **policy session** held in February/March would be to expedite progress in the selected priority areas under discussion. It would agree on policy decisions and mobilize further action by all actors, as well as agree on ways and means of meeting new challenges in implementation.

Annex III

Proposed new organizational arrangements for the Commission on Sustainable Development

Review year What happened? Why? Why not?				
Activity	*Aim*	*Key features*	*Main inputs*	*Results*
Collection and primary analysis of information on progress in implementation.	To provide the Commission with information and data for evaluation of progress in implementation.	Ongoing activity of the Secretariat, in cooperation with United Nations organizations and bodies and the regional commissions; reorientation of information around specific Summit goals and targets; simplification of reporting requirements; links with reporting on Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development indicators.	National reports; progress reports on activities of international and regional organizations; reports on activities of major groups; reports on progress in partnerships and initiatives.	Implementation trends report(s) to assist in evaluation of progress at the national, regional and global levels.
Regional implementation forums: to replace one of the two ad hoc working groups of the Commission during the review year and to be organized back-to-back with meetings of the regional commissions.	Exchange/review of national experiences; assessment of progress by international, regional and subregional organizations; activities of major groups and partnerships in the region.	To be held during the year preceding the global implementation forum; as a rule, chaired by a member of the Bureau of the Commission from the region; participation of Commission members from the region is facilitated by the United Nations; multi-stakeholder discussions of progress, including in the area of partnerships and initiatives.	Implementation trends reports; presentation by Governments, intergovernmental organizations, regional institutions, major groups and regional partnerships.	Reports of regional implementation forums; collection of case studies, good practice and lessons learned from the regions; mobilization of regional actions and partnerships.

Review year

What happened? Why? Why not?

Activity	*Aim*	*Key features*	*Main inputs*	*Results*
Global implementation forum: to replace the second ad hoc working group of the Commission during the review year.	**To evaluate progress in the implementation, including through interregional exchanges of experience.**	**To be held in May/June; active participation of all stakeholders (Governments, international organizations, major groups etc.); platform for launching informal consultative processes (organized by interested Governments and major groups in preparation for the review session).**	**Reports of regional implementation forums; reports on global implementation activities by international organizations, financial institutions, major groups etc.**	**Report of implementation forum; collection of case studies, good practice and lessons learned; record of discussions on partnerships and their role in achieving internationally agreed goals and targets.**

What required priority attention? What are the new challenges?

Activity	*Aim*	*Key features*	*Main inputs*	*Results*
Intersessional initiatives organized by interested Governments and organizations in preparation for the review session.	To enrich preparation for the review session, in particular for identifying areas of concern and new challenges; more in-depth discussions of good practice and lessons learned in follow-up to implementation forums.	To be determined by organizers.	To be determined by organizers.	Reports to the review session; dissemination of good practice and lessons learned.
Secretary-General's state of implementation report.	Analytical overview of progress and identification of areas of concern along with new challenges in the field of implementation.	To be issued in November/December (for consideration at the review session in February/March of the following year).	Results of regional and global implementation forums, and intersessional activities; inputs from international organizations.	Conclusions and recommendations for consideration at the review session.
Review of partnerships for sustainable development.	To take stock of partnerships, including best practice and challenges.	To be issued in November/December (for consideration at the review session in February/March of the following year).	Results of regional and global implementation forums/reporting by the partnerships.	Conclusions and recommendations for consideration at the review session.
Review session.	To identify problem areas which require priority attention, thus setting the agenda for the policy year; decision on how to arrange intersessional activities in preparation for the policy session.	To be held in February/March; innovative arrangements for participation of all implementation actors elaborated by the Bureau, in consultation with interested parties; active involvement of ministers in evaluation of progress and identification of "hot spots" and new challenges; possibility for ministers to discuss progress in the implementation of decisions taken during the previous policy session; discussion/review of partnerships; specific arrangements to be elaborated by the Bureau, in consultation with interested parties.	Presentation by Governments, international organizations and major groups of their views regarding areas of concern as well as new challenges to implementation; report of the Secretary-General.	Identification of specific issues requiring in-depth consideration during the policy year in order to expedite progress; decisions on arrangements for intersessional work during the policy year.

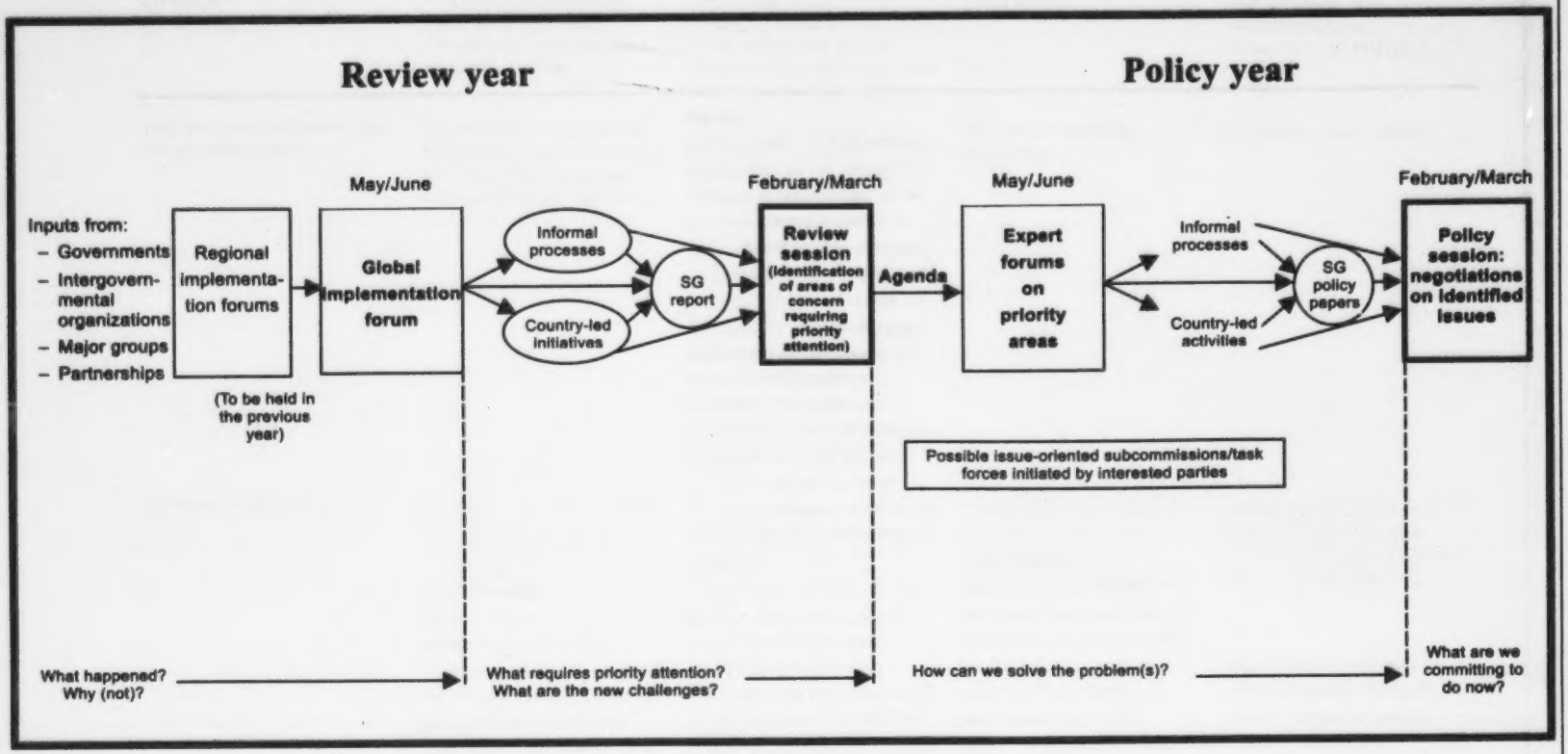
Activity	*Aim*	*Key features*	*Main inputs*	*Results*
Expert forums: to replace two weeks of ad hoc intersessional working groups during the policy year.	To explore practical and policy options for expediting progress in areas identified as a result of the review year; to provide the Commission with the best scientific advice	To be held in May/June; organization of work is flexible and demand driven, depending on the nature of issues; specific arrangements to be elaborated by the Bureau, in consultation with interested parties.	Active participation of scientists, experts and practitioners specializing in given areas.	Reports of expert forums (Chairmen's summaries); launching by interested Governments and organizations of intersessional activities.
Intersessional initiatives and consultative processes.	To enrich preparations for Commission policy sessions; to raise public awareness of issues under consideration.	To be determined by organizers; could be organized by interested parties as task forces or thematic subcommissions (with involvement of representatives of Governments, intergovernmental organizations, major groups and recognized independent experts) with a view to developing independent suggestions on possible ways of tackling specific issues.	To be determined by organizers.	Report to policy session.
Secretary-General's policy paper.	Facilitate discussions in the Commission aimed at expediting progress in areas of concern.	To be issued in November/December (for consideration at the policy session in February/March of the following year); to be prepared in consultation with relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and drawing on the outcomes of expert forums and other sources; to focus on expediting implementation, achievement of goals, overcoming constraints etc.	Results of expert forums; United Nations system, major groups, experts; intersessional activities.	Recommendations and proposals for action on issues on the agenda of the current policy session.

Commitments/actions to do to expedite progress

Activity	*Aim*	*Key features*	*Main inputs*	*Results*
Policy session	Agree on policy decisions and mobilize further action by all actors to expedite progress in areas of concern, as well as agree on ways and means of meeting new challenges in implementation.	To be held in February/March; not limited to negotiations; interaction between ministers and high-level officials from the United Nations system, leaders from major groups; would also provide various opportunities for participation of stakeholders and implementation partners. Possible options include arrangements similar to Summit partnership plenary sessions, panels/hearings, interactive dialogues, partnership activities and possible in-session advisory panels/boards comprised of implementation agencies and major groups; opportunities for new partnerships; specific arrangements to be elaborated by the Bureau, in consultation with interested parties.	Policy papers of the Secretary-General; reports of expert forums; report containing an update on partnerships; results of intersessional activities and processes; presentations by implementation agencies, major groups.	Negotiated decision aimed at expediting progress; commitments to further action; new partnerships to expedite implementation.

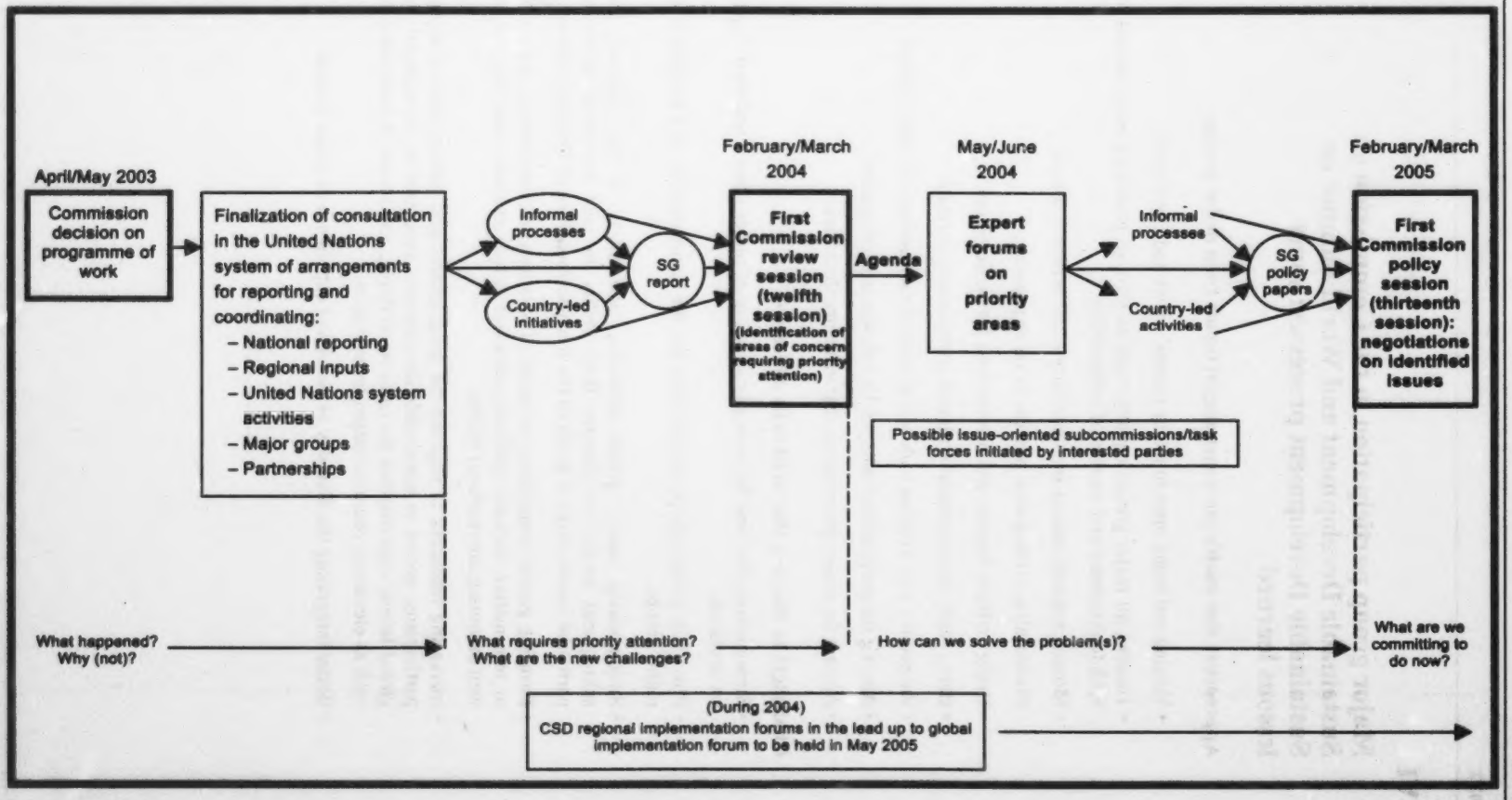
Annex IV

Flow chart of the proposed two-year work cycle of the Commission on Sustainable Development



Annex V

Flow chart of the transitional work cycle of the Commission on Sustainable Development (2003-early 2005)


April/May 2003
Commission decision on programme of work
Finalization of consultation in the United Nations system of arrangements for reporting and coordinating:
– National reporting
– Regional inputs
– United Nations system activities
– Major groups
– Partnerships
Informal processes
Country-led initiatives
SG report
February/March 2004
First Commission review session (twelfth session)
(Identification of areas of concern requiring priority attention)
Agenda
May/June 2004
Expert forums on priority areas
Informal processes
Country-led activities
SG policy papers
February/March 2005
First Commission policy session (thirteenth session): negotiations on identified issues
Possible issue-oriented subcommissions/task forces initiated by interested parties
What happened? Why (not)?
What requires priority attention? What are the new challenges?
How can we solve the problem(s)?
What are we committing to do now?
(During 2004)
CSD regional implementation forums in the lead up to global implementation forum to be held in May 2005

Annex VI

Major group participation in the Commission on Sustainable Development and World Summit on Sustainable Development processes: some lessons learned

Approaches that enable more meaningful inputs from major groups

- Valuing and being open to major groups' views and experience.
- Treating all major groups equally, such as through providing equal access for each to processes and sources of information.
- Moving towards mutual accountability of all parties involved.
- Maintaining a transparent process as far as possible.
- Using multiple formats and mechanisms for participation.
- Being ready to experiment with new participatory formats.
- Respecting and working with self-organized mechanisms of major groups.
- Aiming for geographical and gender balance in participation.
- Aiming for major group inputs that influence decisions.

Challenges in this area that need to be addressed

- Strengthening the link between participation of major groups and their impact on decisions.
- Providing guidelines or mechanisms for the accountability and credibility of major groups.
- Strengthening major group networks, particularly at the regional and subregional levels, to increase their ability to take concerted action on particular issues, tasks or goals of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.
- Ensuring greater consistency in terms of openness to participation and access to information between political processes across countries and regions, as well as among international bodies.
- Increasing resources to improve the geographical and gender balance among participants; access to sustainable development processes at the regional and global levels; opportunities for capacity-building; and access to infrastructure, such as electronic communication technologies.
- Better integrating the diversity of views and experience of major groups.